1:Gurdon E-4, 5 (no date) 1907 AR7 Khasi AR7

COTTON CLOTHS.

283 288 In the Jaintia Hills at Mynso cotton is spun into thread, and weaving is carried on there, but on a limited scale. The Mynso people weave the small strips of cloth worn by the men to serve the purpose of the Assamese *lengti* or Hindi *languti*. In Suhtnga the people import cotton thread from Mynso and weave the (*ingki*) or sleeveless coat, peculiar to the district; these coats are dyed red and blue. The dark blue or black dye 824 is obtained from the leaf of a plant called *u sybu*, which 386 Mr. Rita has classified as *strobilanthus hoeditolius*, which 288 grows in the gardens round the homesteads. The leaves are dried, then reduced to powder, mixed with hot water, and the skeins of thread are steeped in the liquid. The colour is permanent. The red dye is obtained from the mixture of the dry bark of two shrubs, *ka lapyndong* (*symplocos racemosa*, Roxb.), and *ka 'larsong* (*morinda-tinctoria*, Roxb.), the latter being the same as the Assamese (আইচ) *ichukith*. The bark is dried, then pounded, and the two sorts are mixed together and made into a paste with hot water. The skeins are steeped in this mixture for twenty-four hours, then taken out and divided, and again steeped for another twenty-four hours. The Lalungs and Bhois and Lyngams all weave cotton cloths, which are generally dyed blue, sometimes striped blue and red. The Wars weave cotton cloths which are dyed red and yellow, the cloths being woven in checks. Mr. Darrah remarks that the cotton grown in the Jaintia Hills is said to be the best cotton produced in the province. Its thread can be more closely woven than that of other kinds. This statement, however, is not borne out by Mr. Allen writing in 1858, who says that the cotton is of inferior quality, the staple being short and woolly. The cotton cloths woven by the Bhois are called *spun*.

POTTERY.

[162] 323 The Census Report of 1901 gave the number of persons who are supported by the manufacture of pottery at 54 only. Pottery is manufactured at one place only in the Jaintia Hills,

1: Gurdon E-4, 5 (no date) 1907 AR7 Khasi AR7

323 **Larnai.** The Larnai potters make many of the earthen pots to be found in the Khasi houses called *khiew ranei*, or sometimes *khiew Larnai*. Mr. Gait says, "These potters use two kinds of clay mixed; one is of a dark blue colour, *'dew-iong*, and the other of a greyish colour, *'dew khluid*. These clays seem to correspond closely with the *kumár máti* and *hira máti* of the Brahmaputra Valley."

323 The clay at Larnai is well beaten out upon a hide, or upon a
415 flat disc of wood; the women fashion the pots by hand, they do
435 not use the potter's wheel. The pots are sun-dried and then fired. They are painted black with an infusion of a bark called *sohliya*. The Larnai potters also make flower-pots which are sold in Shillong at from 2 annas to 4 annas each, the price of the ordinary pot or *khiew ranei* varying from 2 pice to 4 annas each. A water-pot (*khiew um*) is also fashioned, which is sometimes used in the manufacture of liquor, price 4 annas to 6 annas each.

16: McCormack E-4,5 (1956-1958) 1964
[P, 108 B] AR7 Khasi AR7

children, but Christian influence has eradicated or driven underground the consumption by women and children. **Industrial arts.** The only industrial arts traditionally practiced in all households were a rudimentary carpentry and a simple utilitarian basketry. Other arts were few, and were practiced as village specialties: the washing and smelting of iron ore and the forging of hoes, daos, knives, swords, and cooking pots (upland Khasis); the spinning of cotton thread (Mynso village, Jaintia); the dyeing of cotton thread and the weaving of cloth (Jaintias, Bhois, Lyngngams, Wars); the spinning and weaving of Eri silk (Khyrwang and Nongtung villages, Bhoi and Jaintia); and the hand manufacture, without wheel, of painted earthenware pots (Larnai village, Jaintia). Ironworking and the production of cotton goods have nearly died out through the competition of machine-made goods. Carpentry has greatly improved. An innovation of major importance is the sewing and tailoring, on sewing machines, of ready-made garments for both sexes. [Cf. Darrah 1896; C., W. 1832.] **Trade.** Khasi villages normally contain a number of household shops operated by women. Every Khasi also lives within walking distance of several village markets that are held on successive days of the eight-day week. The limits of market intercourse for the members of any particular village can be roughly distinguished by their naming the days of their week, which are called after the active markets. The exception is the huge market at Shillong, much of which is active daily, and which serves as a magnet for Khasis from all over the hills. The traditional barter has given way to currency in all markets. The small ones contain at least some local farm produce, plus other essentials like betel nut, and the food and tea stalls which serve as centers of social intercourse. The big markets contain not only regional produce and manufactures but also products from distant parts of the hills, brought for sale by traveling middlemen. There is also substantial trade, from the hills to the valleys, in potatoes, pears, hides, lac, cotton, caoutchouc, the wood of the sal tree, Eri silk thread, limestone, coal, ivory, bay leaf, betel nut, pan leaves, bananas, sugar cane, oranges, til, turmeric, and chilies. From the plains to the hills, there is trade in dried fish, paddy rice, salt, cooking oil, kerosene, matches, tea, sugar, wheat flour, machine-made cloth, shoes, metal pots, crockery, porcelain objects, coral beads, silver, and gold. Markets are important not only as economic institutions but also as centers for recreation (including archery competitions), courtship, reaffirmation of kinship ties with distant relatives, and the dissemination of information of all kinds. [Cf. Stegmüller 1924a.] **Division of labor.** Men do the heavy work, such as clearing and burning the swidden fields, caring for cattle and goats and driving them to market, butchering and selling large cuts of beef and pork, carpentry and mining, and driving and laboring on motor vehicles. They also tailor men's

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243 on from October to December. For millets the seed is sown in April-May and reaped about six months later. Maize is usually sown in
244 April-May and ripens in August - September. For potato, generally three crops are raised in the district ; the first is sown in December-January and harvested in April-May, the second is sown in February-March and is gathered in June-July and the third is sown in July-August and is harvested in November-December.

245 For oranges and betelnut the orchards are cleared of weeds twice a year. Harvesting of orange takes place from October to January. Betelnut ripens at the beginning of the year and are collected between February and May.

241 2.6.3 **Agricultural implements.**—The usual agricultural implements are a hoe, a sickle, three or four kinds of doas, a harrow, a crowbar which is used for the construction of irrigation channels, 'sierras' and winnowing baskets. Bullock drawn plough is used in wet paddy cultivation in parts of Jowai subdivision and in Bhoi area and resembles the one in use in the plains of the State.

2. 6. 4. **General cultural practices.**—The cultivators mostly adhere to their indigenous practices of cultivation. Rotation of crops is not widely used. Cultivation of rice is usually done by broadcasting the seeds though transplanting is also in vogue in some areas. Mixed cropping is widely practised. Cultivation by making terraces in the hill slopes is gaining popularity in the district.

433 326 323 285 306 286 171 654 231 2.7 **Cottage Industries.**—Cottage Industries, it appears, have not found very great favour among the people of the district. A few families here and there manufacture iron implements, earthenware, pottery, baskets, mats and jewellery. In striking contrast with other districts weaving of cotton clothes is rare among the Khasis. The Mikirs in Bhoi area and in areas adjoining North Cachar and Mikir Hills practice it only for their domestic consumption. At present, the Government is trying to popularise weaving in the district and this has been welcomed by the Khasis. Among other cottage industries production of eri cocoon in the northern part of the district adjoining Kamrup district and bee keeping throughout the district are worth mentioning.

142 147 441 563 2.8 **The People.**—The Khasis and Jaintias are a short sturdy race distinct from the neighbouring hill tribes. By nature they are hardy and laborious and in respect of manual labour, they are free from any inhibition. Side by side with the Khasis live the Mikirs, Garos and Nepalis who form respectively 7.32 percent, 3.38 percent and 3·27 per cent of the total rural population. Besides, there are plains people who are mainly concentrated in the town of Shillong. In the marketing centres of the border area there are a large number of Bengali Hindus who dominate the bulk of the trade in the border areas.

241 433 461 2.9 **Occupation.**—The greater portion of the population of the district subsists on cultivation. More than 75 percent of the rural households are predominantly agricultural. The industrious Khasi agriculturists males and females have a high regard for hard labour